

INVASIVE SPECIES MANAGEMENT WITH VOLUNTEERS PROJECT PROPOSALS

Refuge/Wetland Management District: Steigerwald Lake, Franz Lake, and Pierce National Wildlife Refuges (Columbia Gorge Refuges).

Name of Project: Invasive Plant ED/RR Search

Total amount requested: \$9,700

Project Description (20 Points): 1: Survey, Inventory, and/or Post-treatment Monitoring:

The proposed project is a part of the Refuges' invasive species management program and will help achieve goals and improve focal conservation target habitats identified in the Refuges' CCP. Early Detection/Rapid Response (ED/RR) is the lead component of this project, and will be implemented to inventory approximately 580 acres to significantly expand the impact and benefits of ED/RR efforts. Much of this search will be conducted in woodland and forest habitat on foot. Some areas will be searched comprehensively for the first time, especially oak, deciduous and coniferous forest areas. Search will focus on the following species in conservation target habitats – yellow flag iris, purple loosestrife, and Japanese knotweed in floodplain wetlands, creeks and river shorelines; shiny geranium and old man's beard in oak woodland and sandy riparian forest; slenderflower thistle and knapweeds along roadsides and grassland/pastures, and other watch species as encountered such as garlic mustard. Volunteers including licensed applicators will search and map, largely on foot or by ATV and canoe, and treat small infestations for ED/RR (< 5 acres). Funds will be obligated in FY 2014. Most of the project (\$6,700 or 70%) will be spent in July-September of Fiscal Year 14. The remaining 30% will be spent during the woodland/forest search work (\$3,000 or 30%), which will need to take place during the FY 15 dormant season (Oct-early Mar) for optimal efficacy and to minimize poison oak exposure. New invasive species populations will be searched and mapped using GPS and by plotting waypoints for entry into the Refuge complex GIS.

Friends Groups and other Volunteers (10 Points): The project would be directed by the Friends of Ridgefield National Wildlife Refuge Habitat Coordinator, working with U.S. Fish and Wildlife Refuge Complex volunteers, and members of the Columbia Gorge Refuge Stewards Friends group. This would be the first direct habitat restoration partnership between the two Friends' groups and Gorge Refuges' volunteers.

Comment [BF1]: Seed money

Other Partners (10 Points): Best practices and results would be exchanged with Clark County Vegetation Management, the local Skamania County Noxious Weed Control Board, and neighboring land managers for the Washington State Department of Natural Resources Natural Areas Program and the Columbia Land Trust, who manage adjoining properties and are the most experienced area practitioners.

Criteria for Project Success (10 Points): 580 acres total will be searched between the three Refuges. Three Gorge refuge volunteers already involved in invasives control on the refuges will receive additional refuge training, maps, and fact sheets on target invasive plant search and ID. An effort will be made by the Refuge Manager to recruit additional volunteers to assist with the detection portion of this project.

Comment [BF2]: This doesn't quite line up with the statement above about bringing together the 2 Friends Groups. Here, it insinuates no involvement by the Ridgefield group.

Budget:

Salaries and Benefits: Habitat Restoration Coordinator Jul-Sept FY14	5,200
Salaries and Benefits: Habitat Restoration Coordinator Oct-Mar FY15	3,000
Herbicide, PPE, equipment, volunteer supplies, training	1,500
TOTAL requested	\$9,700
Volunteer Time (estimated 75 hours)	\$1,650
Administrative overhead, Friends of RNWR (approx. 4%)	\$400
Refuge vehicle use (ATV, boat truck) and fuel	\$1,000